Speakers advise courage in seeking international careers

By NANCY BRINK

"I encourage you to be courageous," pleaded Kathy Irving, to the group of 90 students who had gathered to hear five women speak about their International Careers. The program was held on Monday, April 4th, and was cosponsored by the International Office and the Mellon Grant.

Intended to expose students to jobs which they could obtain immediately after graduation, the careers presented ranged from International Banking in Mexico to working for the World Affairs Council in Boston.

Irving encouraged people to go to the country on their own. In her view, the best assurance of getting a job abroad is to be in the country when someone needs a native speaker.

Irving taught English as a second language in Japan. She felt that the best training for this job was to be a native speaker, and, possibly, to take a course in the methodology of teaching English as a second language.

Andrea Ruelius, the third speaker, also taught English as a second language. With a degree in Language and Linguistics, she applied to the Peace Corps through the Boston office. Her Peace Corps experience, she said, gave her a chance to explore her own values, as well as those of others.

Leita Kaldi, the fourth speaker, related her experience of hitchhiking in Europe for three months, showing up at the WESCO office in Paris, and getting a job. When her contract ran out, she left the country for a few days, returned to France, and got another three-month contract. By doing this, she remained on a tourist visa, earned untaxed pay, was able to travel, and avoided having to get working papers and a permanent resident visa.

Meg Little, who holds a degree in Russian Literature and Language, began her career in the United States, rather than abroad. She worked for the American Field Service, which sponsors exchanges between high school students of all countries. She then taught English in a Finnish high school, although she spoke no Finnish. Then, through the Experiment in International Living, she led a group of students to the Soviet Union. She now works for the World Affairs Council.

The women were asked what they felt was most important in getting a job abroad. Smith said she feels that appearing professional and serious helps applicants obtain and keep their jobs. She said that a masters degree does not necessarily give applicants an advantage. She did suggest, however, that for international business a degree in International Studies or a degree from a school such as Fletcher may help.

The program was intended to suggest jobs available to students immediately after graduation. In the future, the International Office hopes to sponsor another talk which will concentrate on long-range career plans. In addition, the five panelists suggested that information could be obtained from organizations like the Institute for International Education, Technical Assistants in New York, The YMCA, Chamber of Commerce in Washington, UNESCO, and the International Association of Students in Economics and Management at Harvard or Boston University. The International Office in Brown House also has information available.